



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

January 21, 2011

TO: Francois Carrier, Planning Board Chair

FROM: Valerie Ervin, Council President
Nancy Floreen, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee Chair

SUBJECT: Master Plan Schedule

Despite the Council's best efforts to establish a workplan for the Planning Department that would have facilitated Council action on the Commercial Residential (CR) zoning text amendments (ZTA) prior to our work on the operating budget, you have notified us that the Planning Board has determined that it requires additional worksessions to complete its work on the CR zone. As you know, the additional time required to transmit the CR zone to the Council has a ripple affect on the master plans the Council is scheduled to consider over the next few months, since the Kensington, Takoma Langley and Wheaton CBD plans all use the CR zone. This memorandum sets forth our understanding of the practical considerations of the schedule changes required.

Since the Planning Board requires additional worksessions on the CR zone, it will be impossible for the Council to hold a public hearing or worksessions on the ZTA before beginning our work on the budget in April and May. The current schedule for the Planning Board review of the ZTA would not allow for a Council public hearing until early April. Therefore our review of the ZTA must occur after we complete work on the budget. To ensure that we can hold a public hearing in May and then begin work on the ZTA as soon as we complete the budget, this ZTA must be transmitted to the Council no later than March 11. It is our intent to finish our work on the ZTA this summer.

It is clear that the Council cannot continue worksessions on Kensington or begin worksessions on Takoma Langley or Wheaton until you have submitted the CR ZTA because the zoning recommendation is one of the most critical issues in each plan. We expect that your staff will revise each master plan as needed to reflect the proposed changes to the CR zone, so that the Council's public hearing on each plan

will be on a draft plan with the correct zoning recommendations. To accomplish this, the Council will hold a second public hearing on the Takoma Langley Plan in mid-May and ask that you transmit any amendments to the Plan related to the CR zone prior to May 1. We will begin worksessions in June after we have completed our work on the budget.

The Council's public hearing on the Kensington Sector Plan occurred almost a year ago. We believe that the Plan should be revised to reflect the changes to the CR zone and that the Planning Board and Council should each have new public hearings on the revised plan. We will return this plan to the Board and request that staff incorporate the new zone by June 1. (We leave it to the Planning Board to determine whether to revisit any master plan recommendation other than the CR zone amendments.) This would enable the Council to hold a public hearing on the revised plan in September and hold worksessions in the fall with adoption in late fall/early winter.

The Wheaton CBD Sector Plan remains a very high priority for the Council, and we ask that you continue to move ahead on that Plan so that we can have final adoption in fall 2011, as shown in the currently approved schedule. We understand from Planning Department staff that the Planning Board needs to hold a final worksession on the Sector Plan after you complete work on the CR zone amendments, and then another Planning Board meeting for final approval of the Planning Board draft once all Planning Board recommended changes have been compiled. Planning Department staff estimate that this will occur in the spring, which would enable the Council to have a public hearing in the summer (after the Executive review and advertisement of the public hearing) and worksessions in September. Our objective is to minimize any delays to the approved schedule to allow pending development applications to proceed as expeditiously as possible.

With these necessary changes the new schedule for the CR ZTA and master plan review will be as follows:

	Date for Planning Board Transmittal	Date for Council Public Hearing	Goal for Council Action
CR ZTA	By March 11	Early to Mid-May	By end of July
Takoma-Langley	Transmit any revisions related to CR zone before May 1	Mid-May	By end of July
Wheaton	ASAP but no later than April 15	End of July (after 60 day period for Executive review and 30 day advertising)	Early Fall
Kensington (Revised Plan that incorporates new CR recommendations)		September	November – December (before winter recess)

The next master plan due to the Council is Long Branch. The schedule currently plans for a December 2011 Council public hearing on the master plan, and we see no reason to adjust the date for this plan or any subsequent plan.